

FOOTHILLS HOMELESS VETERAN STAND DOWN 2013

The 2nd Annual Foothill Homeless Veteran Stand Down will take place April 26, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Hickory American Legion Fairgrounds.

This year the Stand Down will only be open to Veterans. Homeless Veterans and Veterans who are in serious need will be helped first. Services that will be provided include medical, dental, eye care, claims assistance, education assistance, clothing, food, and haircuts.

Counties included in this year's Stand Down are Alexander, Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Iredell, Lincoln, McDowell, Watauga, and Wilkes Counties.

Last year the Stand Down was a huge success with approximately 500 people in attendance. With more support from other counties, a larger crowd is expected this year. The VA Medical Center from Salisbury will be in attendance assisting Veterans with Healthcare enrollment. Many other nonprofit agencies will also be in attendance to include Veteran Service Officers from Catawba County and other surrounding counties, Exodus House Ministries, Department of Veterans Affairs, local churches, healthcare and mental health providers.

Veterans will be able to get clothing, military surplus, sleeping bags, and boots and shoes. They will also be able to get food and hygiene items, as well as food items.

If you are interested in volunteering for this event please visit the website at www.foothillsstanddown.org or contact Jim Starkey at 828-294-0184 or Larry McMullen at 828-320-2842.



“Million Veteran Program” Seeks Volunteers

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched a new program, The Million Veteran Program (MVP).

This new program is to study how heredity (genetics) affects health and illness. MVP will build one of the world's largest databases with blood samples and medical histories from one million Veteran volunteers who sign up over the next 5 to 6 years.

The data will be stored anonymously to ensure privacy and will be used to study chronic diseases and military-related illnesses. The results may lead to new ways of preventing and treating these conditions in veterans. You can sign up at your nearest VA Medical center or call 1-866-441-6075.

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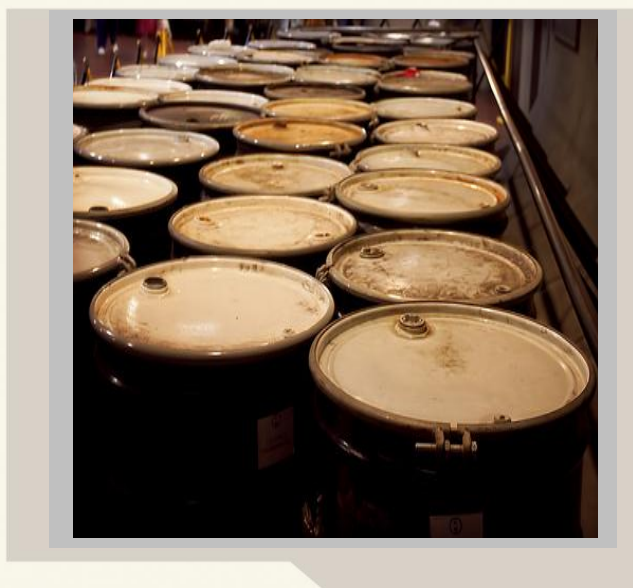
VA EXPANDS DATES OF AGENT ORANGE EXPOSURE IN KOREA FROM 1968-69 TO 1968-71

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has now expanded the dates when illnesses associated with exposure to Agent Orange can be presumed related to their military service. This will provide an easier road to obtaining healthcare by veterans who served along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in Korea during the Vietnam War.

Previously, the VA recognized exposure dates from April of 1968 through July of 1969. VA now presumes exposure dates from April 1 of 1968 through August 31, of 1971. These dates apply to veterans who served in units determined by the VA and the Department of Defense to have operated in an area of the DMZ where Agent Orange and other herbicides were applied.

This presumption simplifies and speeds the application process for Veterans of the Korean DMZ. Currently there are 14 presumptive illness associated with Agent Orange in which Veterans can file disability claims for. These include: AL Amyloidosis, Chronic B-Cell Leukemia's, Chloracne, Diabetes Type II, Hodgkin's disease, Ischemic Heart Disease, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Parkinson's Disease, Peripheral Neuropathy (Acute & Subacute), Porphyria Cutanea Tarda, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers, and Soft Tissue Sarcomas.

Veterans who have these presumptive illnesses and served in Vietnam or the Korean DMZ are encouraged to inquire about disability compensation.





VA'S NEW MILITARY EXPOSURE WEBSITE

The VA has developed a new website where veterans can quickly search for military exposure topics.

The user-friendly "4 Ways to Find Exposures" serves as a virtual compass to point visitors to information on a range of chemical, physical and environmental hazards during military service.

Visitors to the site can search by related health concerns, wars and operations, exposure categories, and exposure topics "A to Z".

Other topics of conversation include VA Healthcare, disability compensation, and registry evaluations.

To access the site visit:
www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures.

BLUE WATER NAVY VETERANS AND AGENT ORANGE

To date, the VA has determined that there is not enough information to determine whether or not Blue Water Navy personnel were or were not exposed to Agent Orange.

An independent agency, The National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine (IOM) conducted an investigation which provided unbiased and evidence-based recommendations to the government and other health and science policy makers.

The VA presumes that Veterans who served on the ground or inland waterways in Vietnam ("Brown Water Navy") were exposed to Agent Orange. The VA has not granted presumption to "Blue Water" Navy Veterans, who served on open sea ships off the shore of Vietnam.

The VA decides claims from Blue Water Veterans on a case by case basis. Blue Water Veterans must show they set foot on the land of Vietnam or served on its inland waterways any time between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975.

The VA maintains a list of US Navy and Coast Guard ships that operated in Vietnam during the war and could have been exposed to Agent Orange. Veterans who served aboard open sea ships that did not enter inland waterways will only be presumed exposed if the ship docked to shore, sent small boats ashore, or otherwise sent crew members ashore. Please visit www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/shiplist.